

CLAIMS

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1. A recording and reproducing apparatus;
comprising:
a storing portion for storing at least one
program of contents data;
a recording and reproducing portion for
writing contents data to said storing portion and
reading contents data from said storing portion;
a signal generating portion for generating a
permission signal that allows said recording and
reproducing portion to reproduce contents data stored
in said storing portion,
wherein when said signal generating portion
transmits the permission signal to said recording and
reproducing portion, said recording and reproducing
portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing
portion.
 2. The recording and reproducing apparatus as
set forth in claim 1,
wherein said storing portion stores index
data along with contents data, and
wherein said recording and reproducing
portion rewrites the index information corresponding to
the permission signal so as to allow said recording and
reproducing portion to reproduce contents data stored
in said storing portion corresponding to the rewritten
index data.

3. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 2,

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion supplies the index data stored in said storing portion to said signal generating portion, and

wherein said signal generating portion generates a permission signal corresponding to the index data received from said recording and reproducing portion.

4. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 3,

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion writes contents data to said storing portion, the index data stored in said storing portion is imperfect index data, and

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion rewrites the imperfect index data into perfect index data corresponding to the permission signal received from said signal generating portion.

5. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 4,

wherein the permission signal generated by said signal generating portion is perfect index data of

contents data that is read from said storing portion and that is reproduced by said recording and reproducing portion.

6. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 2, further comprising:

a charging processing portion for performing a charging process before said signal generating portion generates the permission signal,

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion supplies the index data to said signal generating portion and said charging processing portion performs the charging process, and

wherein when said charging processing portion has completed the charging process, said signal generating portion generates the permission signal.

7. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a terminal unit connected to said recording and reproducing portion; and

a server unit having said signal generating portion, said server unit being connected to said terminal unit through a communication network.

8. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a terminal unit having said signal generating

portion, said terminal unit being connected to said recording and reproducing portion; and

a server unit connected to said terminal unit through a communication network.

5 9. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a charging processing portion,
wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion supplies a charging process signal to said charging processing portion so that said charging processing portion performs the charging process, and

10 wherein after said charging processing portion has completed the charging process, said signal generating portion supplies the permission signal to said recording and reproducing portion.

15 10. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 9,

20 wherein said storing portion stores the charging process signal and the reproduction permission signal along with contents data, and

wherein said recording and reproducing portion rewrites the reproduction permission signal corresponding to the permission signal received from said signal generating portion.

25 11. A recording and reproducing apparatus,

comprising:

5 a recording and reproducing portion, having a storing portion for storing at least one program of contents data, for writing contents data to said storing portion and reading contents data from said storing portion; and

10 a server unit having a signal generating portion for generating a permission signal that allows said recording and reproducing portion to reproduce contents data stored in said storing portion,

15 wherein when said signal generating portion transmits the permission signal to said recording and reproducing portion, said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion.

12. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 11,

wherein said storing portion stores index data along with contents data, and

20 wherein said recording and reproducing portion rewrites the index information corresponding to the permission signal so as to allow said recording and reproducing portion to reproduce contents data stored in said storing portion corresponding to the rewritten index data.

25 13. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 12,

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion supplies the index data stored in said storing portion to said signal generating portion, and

wherein said signal generating portion generates a permission signal corresponding to the index data received from said recording and reproducing portion.

14. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 13,

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion writes contents data to said storing portion, the index data stored in said storing portion is imperfect index data, and

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion rewrites the imperfect index data into perfect index data corresponding to the permission signal received from said signal generating portion.

15. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 14,

wherein the permission signal generated by said signal generating portion is perfect index data of contents data that is read from said storing portion and that is reproduced by said recording and

reproducing portion.

16. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 12, further comprising:

5 a charging processing portion for performing a charging process before said signal generating portion generates the permission signal,

10 wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion supplies the index data to said signal generating portion and said charging processing portion performs the charging process, and

15 wherein when said charging processing portion has completed the charging process, said signal generating portion generates the permission signal.

17. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, further comprising:

a charging processing portion,

20 wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said recording and reproducing portion supplies a charging process signal to said charging processing portion so that said charging processing portion performs the charging process, and

25 wherein after said charging processing portion has completed the charging process, said signal generating portion supplies the permission signal to

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said recording and reproducing portion.

18. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 17,

5 wherein said storing portion stores the charging process signal and the reproduction permission signal along with contents data, and

10 wherein said recording and reproducing portion rewrites the reproduction permission signal corresponding to the permission signal received from said signal generating portion.

19. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 17,

15 wherein said charging and processing portion is connected to said recording and reproducing portion and to said server unit through a communication network.

20. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 19,

20 wherein at least unique identification data is stored in said terminal unit,

wherein when said recording and reproducing portion reproduces contents data stored in said storing portion, said terminal unit supplies the identification data to said charging processing portion, and

25 wherein when said charging processing portion has determined that said terminal unit is valid corresponding to the identification data received from

said terminal unit, said charging processing portion starts the charging process.

21. The recording and reproducing apparatus as set forth in claim 20,

5 wherein when said charging processing portion has determined that said terminal unit is valid corresponding to the identification data received from said terminal unit, said charging processing portion is connected to said server unit through the communication network so that said charging processing portion performs the charging process and rewrites the reproduction permission signal corresponding to the permission signal received from said signal generating portion.

10 22. A data reproducing method, comprising the steps of:

15 issuing a contents data transmission request to a server unit, the contents data transmission request causing a server unit to transmit index data corresponding to contents data reproduced from a storing portion of a terminal unit, the storing portion storing at least one program of contents data and the index data;

20 causing the server unit to transmit index data of contents data reproduced by the terminal unit corresponding to the transmission request received from the terminal unit;

causing the terminal unit to rewrite the
index data stored in the storing portion corresponding
to the index data received from the server unit; and

causing the terminal unit to reproduce
5 contents data stored in the storing portion
corresponding to the rewritten index data.

23. The data reproducing method as set forth in
claim 22,

10 wherein when the terminal unit reproduces
contents data stored in the storing portion, the
terminal unit supplies the index data stored in the
storing portion to the server unit and the server unit
supplies perfect index data to the terminal unit
corresponding to the received index data.

15 24. The data reproducing method as set forth in
claim 23,

wherein when the recording and reproducing
portion writes contents data to the storing portion,
the index data is imperfect, and

20 wherein when the terminal unit reproduces
contents data stored in the storing portion, the
charging processing portion rewrites the imperfect
index data corresponding to perfect index data received
from the server unit.

25 25. A data reproducing method, comprising the
steps of:

reading charging data stored in a storing

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portion when a terminal unit having the storing portion for storing at least one program of contents data and charging data corresponding thereto is connected to a charging processing unit;

5 transmitting the charging data that is read from the storing portion to the charging processing unit and to a server unit connected thereto through a communication network so as to perform a charging process; and

10 allowing the terminal unit to reproduce contents data stored in the storing portion after the charging process has been completed between the charging processing unit and the server unit.

26. The data reproducing method as set forth in claim 25,

15 wherein the storing portion has stored the contents data, the charging data, and permission data that allows contents data to be reproduced, and

20 wherein the permission data is rewritten to data that allows contents data stored in the storing portion to be reproduced after the charging process has been completed between the charging processing unit and the server unit.

27. The data reproducing method as set forth in claim 26,

25 wherein when contents data is written to the storing portion, the permission data is data that

prohibits the contents data stored in the storing portion from being reproduced.

28. The data reproducing method as set forth in claim 27,

5 wherein when the terminal unit is connected to the charging processing unit, it performs an authenticating process for the terminal unit.

29. A data recording and reproducing method, comprising the steps of:

10 storing at least one program of contents data stored in a first storing portion and charging data that represents charging information of the contents data to a second storing portion of a terminal unit;

15 reading the charging data stored in the storing portion when the terminal unit is connected to a charging processing unit;

transmitting the charging data to the charging processing unit and to a server unit connected thereto through a communication network; and

20 allowing the terminal unit to reproduce contents data stored in the storing portion after the charging process has been completed between the charging processing unit and the server unit.

30. The data recording and reproducing method as set forth in claim 29,

25 wherein the storing portion has stored the contents data, the charging data, and permission data

that allows contents data to be reproduced, and

wherein the permission data is rewritten to data that allows contents data stored in the storing portion to be reproduced after the charging process has been completed between the charging processing unit and the server unit.

31. The data recording and reproducing method as set forth in claim 30,

wherein when contents data is written to the storing portion, the permission data is data that prohibits the contents data stored in the storing portion from being reproduced.